

A General Framework and Supporting Strategies for Teaching Mixed Classes
Maria M. Carreira
National Heritage Language Resource Center, UCLA

Many heritage language (HL) learners study their home language in the context of mixed classes, i.e. classes with second language learners and heritage language learners. Yet, most of the literature on HL teaching has focused on HL classes, to the neglect of mixed classes. Addressing this gap, this paper presents a model of teaching for mixed classes that is premised on the principles of Differentiated Teaching (Tomlinson 2009, 2003). The discussion considers how critical differences between heritage and second language learners should drive teaching and learning in mixed classes. Essential strategies and tools that support this proposal are presented, in particular, flexible grouping, which makes it possible to address the needs of both populations of learners and leverage their complimentary strengths.

Key words: Mixed classes, heritage language learners, Differentiated Teaching, Flexible grouping

Introduction

Though it is widely accepted that heritage language learners (HLLs) should be taught separately from second language learners (L2Ls), particularly at the lower levels of instruction, in actuality large numbers of HLLs study their home language in mixed classes alongside L2Ls (Beaudrie 2011, 2012; Carreira 2014; Valdés et al. 2006). The reasons behind this state of affairs vary from one institution to another and can include low numbers of HLLs, inadequate institutional resources, few trained instructors, and limited faculty and administrative support (Beaudrie 2012; Carreira 2014; Ingold et al. 2002).

This chapter proposes a model for teaching mixed classes. We approach this task by (1) examining the teaching practices of such classes, as currently configured, (2) considering how some critical differences and similarities between HLLs and L2Ls should drive teaching and learning in them and, (3) identifying general approaches and

strategies that can help teachers meet the challenges of mixed classes. The sections that follow take up each of these issues.

The current state of mixed teaching

The term “mixed classes” is commonly used in reference to classes that enroll HLLs and L2Ls. Crucially, the word “mixed” refers only to learner type, not to methods and materials specifically designed for teaching HLLs and L2Ls together, which to-date are virtually non-existent. To this point, a national survey of post-secondary language programs conducted by the National Heritage Language Resource Center indicates that in many cases, the instructional topics, methods, and materials of mixed classes are indistinguishable from those of L2 classes (Carreira 2014). Of particular interest is the fact that only one program out of 300 reported using materials specifically designed for mixed classes. The rest used textbooks and other materials designed primarily or entirely for L2Ls. Remarkably, this was the case even in many mixed classes where HLLs constituted the large majority of enrollments (>75%). Furthermore, in a number of cases, including the one below, respondents expressed outright disregard for the needs of HLLs.

(Name of book) does not address the needs of HL but it does a good job at the beginning level where the majority of our students take the (name of language) as general language requirement and where we have less heritage learners (15%) than at more advanced levels (Carreira 2014: 28).

This comment throws into high relief three interrelated issues that undercut language learning for HLLs in mixed classes, as currently configured. First, for the most part, mixed classes are primarily oriented toward L2Ls, not HLLs (Carreira 2014). Second, there is a dearth of pedagogical materials for the mixed context. As a result, most mixed classes employ L2 textbooks. Many of these textbooks include HL-learner

annotations; but this is not enough. Textbooks, assessment tools, and curricula specifically designed for mixed contexts are needed. And third, there is little understanding, let alone consensus, regarding best practices for teaching HLLs and L2Ls.

These and other issues surrounding mixed classes are widespread. Indeed, they are present in all programs that teach HLLs, regardless of whether or not they have an HL track. This is because even programs with HL courses at the introductory and intermediate levels contend with such issues at the point in the curriculum where the HL and L2 tracks come together. In reference to that point, Valdés (1997: 12) observes that the expectation is that HLLs will “pass undetected as ‘real’ Spanish majors”, which is to say that the expectation is that HLLs will conform to traditional instructional practices, rather than expecting those practices to change to conform to the needs of HLLs.

What would it take to make mixed classes responsive to the needs of HLLs, along with those of L2Ls? As a prerequisite to answering this question, the next section compares such needs.

Pedagogically significant differences between HLLs and L2Ls

Linguistic differences

HLLs’ early language learning experiences in a naturalistic setting (mostly at home), translate into significant linguistic advantages, including more native-like phonological perception and production (Au et al. 2002; Knightly et al. 2003) and a facility with the core aspects of syntax acquired early in life (Montrul et al. 2008).

However, no such advantage is observed with regard to other aspects of linguistic knowledge, in particular, those acquired later in life (Montrul 2012 a, b).

In terms of functional abilities, many Spanish HLLs can understand and participate in everyday conversations. In a national survey of college HLLs, a significant majority of Spanish-speakers (68%) rated their listening skills as advanced or native like and a resounding majority (82%) rated their speaking skills in the range of intermediate and above (Carreira & Kagan 2011).¹ Because these competencies lie beyond the reach of most L2Ls, it is widely accepted that HLLs and L2Ls are best taught in separate classes, particularly at the lower levels of instruction, where the gap between the two populations are most pronounced.

HLLs who end up in mixed classes at the lower levels of instruction, face daunting challenges, not the least of which include being seen as out get an easy “A”, as being intimidating to L2Ls and disruptive to the workflow of the class, as well as being inauthentic Latinos for not knowing Spanish (Beaudrie 2009; Beaudrie & Ducar 2005; Carreira & Beeman 2014; Potowski 2002). Equally problematic, the lower levels of instruction typically do not provide they type of instruction that HLLs need to expand their functional skills.

Kagan and Dillon (2009) argue that such skills are best developed through macro-based (top-down) teaching. Focused on the big picture, macro-based approaches are discourse based and teach grammar and vocabulary as dictated by function or context (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain 2000; Kagan and Dillon 2001). By contrast, micro-based (bottom-up) approaches progress from smaller, simpler units of knowledge, such as grammar and vocabulary, to the discourse level. Micro-based approaches are more

common at the lower levels of instruction because they give less proficient learners the vocabulary and grammar they need to access authentic materials and engage in authentic tasks. Macro-based approaches are more common at the advanced levels, because at such levels learners have the functional skills to engage in complex and authentic activities from the outset of instruction. Since most HLLs have the functional skills to engage in authentic, everyday activities, it follows that they should be taught using macro-based practices.

This is not to say that HLLs should not receive explicit language instruction. Research indicates that they benefit from such instruction (Bowles 2011; Montrul & Bowles 2010; Potowski et al. 2009). As such, the question is not whether to include form-focused instruction in HL teaching, but rather when/how to include it. In keeping with a macro-based approach, authentic materials and tasks should occupy center stage from the beginning of instruction, with form-focused instruction serving a supporting role.²

Because advanced-level courses tend to be macro-based, they are a better fit for HLLs than lower-level courses, which are usually micro-based. However, advanced-level courses are far from perfect. Even highly proficient HLLs are likely to encounter difficulties related to (1) academic Spanish; (2) the Latino achievement gap; and (3) focus-formed instruction.

Regarding academic Spanish, HLLs are likely to lag behind L2Ls, both in terms of their ability to access this register and to use it in the classroom context (Beaudrie et al. 2014). This is because HLLs' main exposure to Spanish comes from the home, primarily in the form of aural, informal language. By contrast, L2Ls learn Spanish in the classroom

context, which offers structured exposure to the academic language, including the written registers.

Because academic Spanish is both a tool and a goal of instruction at the advanced levels, HLLs are at a significant disadvantage, relative to L2Ls. This is particularly true as it pertains to orthography and accentuation, lack of knowledge of which can interfere with HLLs' ability to do well at the advanced levels. It is also true as it pertains to abilities associated with the Advanced and Superior proficiency ratings of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (OPI), which are also important for performing well at the advanced levels of instruction. Such abilities include sustaining a conversation outside the realm of the autobiographical and familiar, communicating in paragraph-style oral discourse, achieving textual cohesion, and using academic vocabulary (Martin et al. 2013). Accustomed to using Spanish in the context of the home, HLLs are vastly more practiced at discussing familiar, everyday experiences and speaking about themselves, than at using academic Spanish. The opposite is true for L2Ls.

Related to this issue is the so-called *Latino achievement gap*, i.e. the lower academic performance of Latino students at all levels of instructions, relative to their non-Latino peers. The factors behind the Latino achievement gap are many and too complex to discuss here. Suffice it to say that they include lower levels of parental education, poverty, frequent relocation, and lack of access to high quality schools (Carreira & Beeman 2014). Crucially, from the point of view of teaching Spanish in mixed classes, this means that some Latino HLLs may be less prepared than their non-Latino counterparts to engage in the kind of work associated with the advanced levels of instruction, particularly composition and literature courses. Such students may find

themselves struggling with reading and writing assignments not so much because they lack functional skills in Spanish but because they lack critical academic tools such as effective research skills, learning strategies, and reading and writing abilities.

Differences in orientation to form-focused instruction

Form-focused instruction can also create problems for HLLs. Beaudrie (2009) notes that HLLs are often confused by explicit grammar explanations, which leads Beaudrie, Ducar, and Potowski (2014: 163) to posit that “teaching methodologies that require manipulating grammar rules may therefore have negative results in performance and methodologies”. In mixed classes, the problem is compounded by the fact that HLLs tend to enter the language learning sequence somewhere beyond the first semester of study, by which time the terminology and practices of foreign language learning are fairly familiar to L2Ls. HLLs’ lack familiarity in this area can leave them feeling disoriented and out of sync with their L2Ls peers.

Torres (2013) addresses another issue regarding form-focused instruction with important consequences for mixed classes. This study found significant differences between HLLs and L2Ls in how they responded to a task-based pedagogical intervention targetting the subjunctive that engaged participants in describing the behavior of students in a university dorm. In keeping with the intended purpose of this activity, the L2Ls focused on form during the task and recognized that the task presented contrasting forms of the subjunctive and indicative. In contrast, the HLLs were oriented primarily to the content of the task – that is, they were concerned with interpreting the meaning of the prompts and reacting as called for in an authentic situation.

Put differently, HLLs have a *performative orientation* with regard to communicative classroom activities, which is to say that they "...adopt a functional orientation to communication and meaning. They focus more on the functions performed through communication...What is important ...is the ability to perform" (Canagarajah, 2013: 92). In naturalistic contexts, such as those in which HLLs come to learn and use their HL, this orientation is highly effective. This is not the case in language classes that are oriented towards developing explicit knowledge of the target language, grammatical accuracy, and facility in the academic registers.

Socio-affective differences

He (2006: 7) argues that identity is "the centerpiece rather than the background of HL development". Taking a similar perspective, Hornberger and Wang 2008 define HLLs as individuals who "have familial or ancestral ties to a particular language and who exert their agency in determining whether or not they are HLLs of that HL and HC" (heritage culture) (27). A survey of HLLs by Carreira & Kagan (2011) bears out the central importance occupied by issues of identity and belonging. Survey respondents reported that their primary reason for studying their home language in college are, first, to learn about their cultural and linguistic roots and, second, to communicate with family and friends in the United States. To meet these goals, Carreira & Kagan (2011) recommend a community-based curriculum, with materials and activities that answer to the experiences of HLLs in the U.S. Similarly, Potowski (2012) advocates for a Spanish HL curriculum that includes the kind of scholarship associated with Latino studies, which is focused primarily on the U.S. Latino experience.

A significant part of this experience involves grappling with ambivalence and

insecurities surrounding the HL. For example, many U.S. Spanish speakers, including HLLs, struggle to reconcile negative societal ideologies about their own variety of Spanish, with the prestige enjoyed by Spanish as a major world language and a marketable asset (Ducar 2012; Leeman 2012). To address these and other concerns, advocates of the Critical Approach propose teaching HLLs about the functions, distribution, and evaluation of dialects and raising awareness of language, power, and social inclusion (Fairclough 2005; Leeman 2005; Martinez 2003; Webb & Miller 2000).

Fairclough (2005) perceptively notes that HL learning is not just about filling in grammatical knowledge; it is also about mastering a second variant (i.e. the standard language), with all of the emotional issues that entails. While form-focused instruction appears to be an effective approach for addressing grammatical gaps resulting from incomplete acquisition, Fairclough argues that it is not as effective at teaching a second variant. For that purpose, she recommends validating students' home dialect first and then using contrastive analysis to point out differences between that dialect and the language of instruction (see also Beaudrie et al. 2014).

By way of summary, Table 1 lists key differences between HLLs and L2Ls that bear on teaching Spanish in mixed classes.

Table 1 Comparative linguistic profile HLLs and L2Ls

Domains	HLLs	L2Ls
Language	Have a facility with the oral language, including native-like pronunciation.	Are proficient with the written language, including orthography and accentuation.

	Have a facility with the informal registers, including home vocabulary.	Are most familiar with the formal registers, including academic vocabulary.
	Are able to make spontaneous use of language.	Are accustomed to rehearsed language.
	Have implicit knowledge of Spanish and are able to engage in every day conversations.	Have explicit knowledge of Spanish, including grammatical terminology and the routines of language learning.
	May speak a non-standard, stigmatized variant of Spanish. Have limited familiarity with the standard language.	Are only, or mostly, familiar with standard/ academic Spanish.
Socio-affective	Have a family connection to the language and the culture and seek personal identity through this connection.	Do not have a family connection to and do not define themselves in terms of the target language or culture.
Learning	Relative to non-Latinos, may have academic deficiencies that interfere with classroom learning.	
	Focus on content and meaning, to the neglect of form-meaning connections.	Focus on making form-meaning connections.

An important observation that emerges from the above is that HLLs and L2Ls have complimentary skills and experiences vis-à-vis the target language and culture. Put differently, each type of learner knows something that the other type would benefit from learning. In mixed classes, this important fact is frequently obscured by a subtractive

view of the skills that HLLs bring to the study of Spanish. Such a view inevitably leads to a search for solutions premised on “fixing” the HLL.

The next section discusses an alternative view, on which looks to enhance learning for both types of learners through grouping strategies that serve to leverage the complimentary skills of HLLs and L2Ls and respond to the needs of each type of learner.

Flexible grouping

Leveraging learners’ complimentary skills through reciprocal learning

Emerging research sheds light on an effective way to take advantage of the complementary strengths of HLLs and L2Ls in mixed classes. Using an information gap activity, Bowles (2011) designed a series of tasks for HLL and L2L dyads (paired interactions involving HLLs and L2Ls). Some tasks called for spontaneous use of the target language and involved home vocabulary. These were relatively easy for HLLs but hard for L2Ls. Other tasks called for explicit linguistic knowledge and involved writing. These were hard for HLLs but easy for L2Ls. The learners were made responsible for completing the tasks together, but the work was distributed in such a way that each member of the pair was assigned the harder task for them. This meant that the learners had to rely on each other for help. HLLs leaned on L2Ls for issues of spelling and accentuation and L2Ls relied on HLLs’ intuitive knowledge of the target language for resolving issues of usage.

This approach proved effective at making the instructional task fruitful for both types of learners. It also gave the learners a keen awareness of their own particular strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of their partner. The positive attitudes generated by this approach may account for an important difference between this study

and Potowski (2002), which found that HLLs and L2Ls both felt ill-at ease in mixed classes - L2Ls were intimidated by the oral proficiency of the HLLs and the HLLs were intimidated by the grammatical knowledge of the L2Ls.

Thus, it seems that a critical feature of successful mixed activities is that they instill a sense of individual and collective empowerment through mutually beneficial partnerships between HLLs and L2Ls. In keeping with this idea, the checklist below can guide the design of activities for HLL-L2L dyads:

- (1) Identify the goal of the instructional task (e.g. practicing the conjugation of irregular verbs, using a grammar feature in semi-spontaneous conversation, etc.).
- (2) Determine which learner will find this task more challenging (see Table 1).
Assign this task to that learner.
- (3) Incorporate an additional task to challenge the other learner.

The cloze (fill-in the blanks) activity below, a staple of foreign language textbooks, serves to illustrate this proposal. The basic task - deciding between the preterit and the imperfect - should be assigned to the L2L because he/she will find it more challenging than the HLL, especially if done orally, in a quasi-spontaneous manner. To challenge the HLL, a secondary task of writing the answers should be added.

_____ (saber) que en Pamplona se _____ (dejar) correr a los toros por la calle durante las fiestas de San Fermín. Sin embargo, no lo _____ (poder) creer cuando _____ (leer) lo que _____ (haber pasado). Un turista _____ (morir) mientras _____ (participar) en la fiesta pamplonense. (Lunn & DeCesaris 2007: 22)

In short, the idea with HLL-L2L dyads is to use the complimentary skills of the learners to create opportunities for reciprocal learning. Applied to cultural topics, this strategy makes it possible to explore cultural practices and beliefs from the vantage

points of HLLs and L2Ls. Akin to using a contrastive analysis approach to teach dialectal differences, this technique engages learners in comparing cultural practices and beliefs, without passing judgment. The rich discussions likely to result from this approach speak to the possibilities that mixed classes present for leveraging the perspectives and experiences of HLLs and L2Ls to develop intercultural understanding.

The thrust of this approach can be illustrated using a staple of L2 textbooks –a reading about the food and eating customs of the Spanish-speaking world. Assuming such a reading about Mexico, the discussion prompts below are designed to engage both types of learners and use their collective insights to arrive at a deeper understanding of the topic.³

- a. One thing that many people in the United States don't realize about Latin American cuisine is...
- b. One thing that many Spanish-speakers abroad (or U.S. Latinos) don't realize about American cuisine is...

Follow up activities can include expanding the original reading by incorporating the information gathered or creating a menu for a hybrid meal that blends the cooking and eating practices of the Spanish-speaking world and the U.S.

Readings and other materials more closely associated with HL instruction can also be used this way in a mixed class. The well-known short story by Sandra Cisneros serves by way of example. Covering issues that are of interest to HLLs, such as marriage and gender roles in Mexico and the U.S. and written in a language that is accessible to HL learners, this story is a staple of Spanish HL classes. Not so for mixed classes. Readings and other pedagogical materials associated with HL teaching are often excluded from

mixed classes because they are deemed to be uninteresting and/or too difficult for L2Ls. As a result, HLLs in mixed classes often miss out on the opportunity to work with the kinds of materials that are best suited to their learning needs, and L2Ls miss out on opportunities to explore issues that are of particular relevance in the U.S.

The key to using these materials in mixed classes is to address issues of engagement and accessibility pertaining to L2Ls. Written for “My Name”, the prompts below aim to illustrate how readings traditionally associated with HL teaching can be made engaging to L2Ls by using a contrastive analysis approach. (The issue of accessibility will be addressed in a later example).

- a. Regarding marriage, Latinos sometimes think that mainstream Americans are _____.
- b. Regarding marriage, mainstream Americans sometimes think that Latinos are _____.

These prompts aim to promote a discussion about the stereotypes that Latinos and mainstream Americans have about each other and, in the process, to foster a deeper understanding of the beliefs and practices of these cultures. This is in line with ACTFL’s Comparisons standard:

As students learn a new language and culture, they develop insight into their own language and culture, thus providing them with a deeper understanding of how language works and how cultures reflect the perspectives, practices, and products of the people who speak that language (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages n.d.: 3).

Separating the two types of learners to address issues of access and engagement

Valuable as it is to have HLLs and L2Ls working together, mixed classes should also

create opportunities for the two populations of learners to work separately from each other. The following comment speaks to the importance of this for HLLs.

In high school I was one of very few Latinos. My friend and I were called the "Mexican kids". This was always funny to me because my Dad's family always told me I was American. In school I was labeled Mexican, but to the Mexicans, I am an American...It's this weird duality in which you are stuck in the middle. Latinos are often told that they are not Americans but also that they are not connected to their heritage. You take pride in both cultures and learn to deal with the rejection...*That's why you seek out other people like yourself. Socializing with people who share a common experience helps you deal with this experience* (emphasis added) (Carreira & Beeman, 2014: 88).

This comment dovetails with Agnes He's view of identity as the centerpiece of HL development and underscores the importance of creating HLL-only niches in mixed classes to provide a safe and comforting environment for HLLs to engage with these issues.

Separating HLLs also proves useful for tackling a particularly vexing problem: their seeming inability to grasp grammar explanations and derive benefit from form-focused instructional tasks. Mini-lessons that teach grammatical terminology and that draw HLLs' attention to form-meaning connections can help correct this problem. Taking the cloze activity described earlier by way of example, a mini-lesson prior to the activity might involve familiarizing HLLs with the terms "preterit" and "imperfect", explaining the types of difficulties that these forms present, and making explicit the learning goals of this activity (including the form-meaning connections therein). Crucially, this type of intervention renders it possible for HLLs to make sense of and participate in form-focused instructional tasks, alongside L2Ls.

Following a similar approach with L2Ls, mini-lessons can target authentic materials

and tasks that present extra difficulties for them. “My graduation speech” by Tato Laviera (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/13/nyregion/13poemweb.html>) serves by way of example. This poem uses Spanglish and non-standard Spanish to represent the author’s linguistic insecurities and his struggles to find identity. Though largely accessible to HLLs, it can prove challenging, if not inaccessible, to L2Ls without pre-reading instruction on certain aspects of language and culture. Mini-lessons can provide this instruction.

These examples call attention to the fact that HLLs and L2Ls have different prescribed entry points to readings and form-focused instruction. Making strategic use of this difference, instructors can separate the two groups, offering pre-reading instruction to L2Ls while HLLs take a first stab at the reading on their own. Once the mini-lesson is done, L2Ls can work on the reading on their own, while the instructor offers a mini-lesson to the HLLs on instructional issues of relevance to them (for example, to study Spanish punctuation and capitalization and to compare standard non-standard features of Spanish, and, in the affective realm, to discuss rejection experienced by Laviera). Later, both populations can come together to engage in common instructional activities, such as those involving collaborative/reciprocal learning.

In short, the idea behind mini-lessons is to give HLLs and L2Ls what they need to derive benefit from all instructional activities and to be able to work together. For HLLs, this often involves helping them make sense of form-focused instruction and, in some cases, targeting deficiencies related to the Latino achievement gap. For L2Ls, this typically involves helping them work with authentic materials.

By way of summary, Table 2 lists the main ideas behind the two grouping strategies presented. Together, these strategies support two overarching goals for mixed classes: (1) creating a sense of community where HL and L2 learners, both, have important contributions to make to the class; and (2) addressing issues of access and engagement, so that both types of learners can benefit from the instructional activities of the class and work together.

Table 2 Flexible grouping strategies for mixed classes

	The language and learning dimensions	The socio-cultural dimension
Homogeneous groups (i.e. HLL-only or L2L-only)	For teacher-led mini lessons, for example, to teach grammatical terminology to HLLs and to provide scaffolding for L2Ls for authentic tasks.	To give HLLs opportunities to discuss issues of relevance among themselves, such as identity, rejection, biculturalism, etc.
Mixed groups (i.e. HLL-L2L dyads, and other mixed configurations)	For reciprocal learning, by taking advantage of HLL's and L2Ls' complimentary strengths and needs.	To compare perspectives of Latino and mainstream American cultural practices and beliefs, following a contrastive analysis approach.

Operationalizing this proposal requires the use of specialized tools and strategies, as well as adopting an instructional orientation that is focused on the big ideas. The next section offers an overview of the tools and strategies. Following that, the final section of this chapter considers the instructional orientation.

Tools and strategies for mixed classes

This section presents a selective number of instructional tools that support the proposed use of flexible grouping. For additional tools, readers should consult the literature on Differentiated Teaching, in particular Tomlinson (2003, 2009) and Carreira (2011), as well as the literature on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), in particular, Echevarría et al. (2013).

Agendas

A learning agenda is a list of exercises or activities that must be completed during a certain period of time. Creating a learning agenda can be as simple as bundling together all homework assignments for a unit of study, rather than assigning them in a piecemeal fashion, from one day to the next.

Learning agendas are valuable in highly diverse classes because they make it possible for students to pace themselves, moving quickly through accessible activities and slowing down with more challenging ones to seek help and avail themselves of additional resources, as needed. In the proposed model, agendas help support the kinds of instructional activities associated with homogeneous groups (see Table 2) by providing purposeful work for one type of learner while the other type meets with the instructor for a mini-lesson.

Agendas can be customized to meet the needs of different learners. For example, a customized agenda for HLLs in a mixed class might follow a macro-based approach, while one for L2Ls might be micro-based. With customized agendas, it is important to strive to equalize the amount of work and level of difficulty such that all students feel that they are being treated fairly. Because this can prove rather daunting, customizing is not recommended for instructors that are new to the use of agendas.

Centers

Centers are designated areas that contain materials and activities for student use. They can have a physical location, as in a corner of a classroom, or they can occupy a virtual space, such as in a course's web page. Well-designed centers include a variety of activities and exercises for a range of levels, offer clear instructions, and employ a record-keeping system to keep track of the work accomplished by students.

In mixed classes, centers should include resources that address the learning needs of each type of learner. For example, they should direct HLLs to resources that are likely to prove useful from the point of view of addressing their socio-affective needs, as well as include activities to help them follow and participate in form-focused instruction. In the same vein, centers should include activities to help L2Ls access authentic materials that may be linguistically or culturally challenging.

Like agendas, centers help support the kinds of instructional activities associated with homogeneous groups by providing opportunities for independent learning for some students while other students meet with the instructor for a mini-lesson or take part in a group activity.

The text-to-self connection

The text-to-self connection is a tool for helping learners connect with a text at a personal level. Two examples of text-to-self connections are given below.

- a. Copy a sentence from the text that caught your attention. Explain the personal relevance of this sentence to you.
- b. I agree with/understand what I just read because in my own life...

In the proposed model, the text-to-self connection fosters engagement and helps support instructional activities associated with the socio-affective dimension. For

example, the prompts below can form the basis for a group discussion by HLLs on socio-affective issues and/or they can inform whole-class discussions along the lines discussed earlier, where HLLs and L2Ls compare their viewpoints and experiences.

The KWL chart

The KWL chart (What We Know/What We Want to Learn/What We have learned) (Carr & Ogle 1987; Echevarría et al. 2013; Ogle 1986) is useful for framing the learning goals at the beginning of each chapter and revisiting them at the end.

In the proposed model, the KWL chart supports the kinds of instructional activities associated with HLL-L2L dyads. The KWL charts below simulate answers by HLLs and L2Ls at the beginning of a unit on the past tense. The arrows indicate opportunities for collaborative learning that emerge from a side-by-side comparison of these answers. KWL charts also provide a roadmap to learning, thereby helping HLLs with form-focused instruction.

A KWL chart by an HLL (hypothetical)	A KWL chart by an L2L (hypothetical)
<u>What I know about the past tense:</u> I can tell a story in the past and I can understand when people talk about the past.	<u>What I know about the past tense:</u> I can conjugate regular past tense verbs and some irregulars. I can write most verbs correctly.
<u>What I want to learn about the past tense:</u> I need to learn how to write some verbs. I have some doubts about how to say some verbs.	<u>What I want to learn about the past tense:</u> I want to be able to use the past tense in conversation, without having to think too much.
<u>What I learned</u>	<u>What I learned</u>

The general instructional orientation: Prioritizing the big ideas

When teaching, it's always important to stay focused on the big ideas that students should come away with. This is all the more critical in mixed classes, where it's easy to get overwhelmed by the differences between learners. Big ideas answer essential questions such as: Why exactly are we teaching ____? What couldn't people do if they didn't understand ____? What do we want our students to understand and be able to do five years from now? (Tomlinson & McTighe 2006: 32).

For example, asking these questions when teaching the past tense in mixed classes serves to identify common goals for all learners: namely, developing the functional skills to handle some conversations and written communications referring to past events and, taking a five year perspective, learning to use strategies to recover lost abilities as well as develop new ones, as needed. With these big ideas driving instruction, instructional activities for HLLs and L2Ls can be identified and addressed, along the lines proposed.

Crucially, orienting instruction around the big ideas extends the horizon of learning beyond any given unit, course, or academic term. In so doing, it reduces the pressure to rapidly level the differences between HLLs and L2Ls and puts the emphasis instead on creating the conditions for long-term language learning. Similarly, orienting instruction around the big ideas puts learning in a wide lens, thereby blurring distinctions between learners that may loom large in the classroom but actually have little bearing on long-term language development.

Summary and conclusions

To successfully meet the challenges of teaching HLLs and L2Ls together, the curricula, pedagogical materials, and instructional practices of mixed classes must be

premised on building on the strengths and addressing the needs of both types of learners. For some aspects of instruction, this may require separating the two populations for targeted instructional interventions, while for others it may involve bringing them together for reciprocal learning.

The framework proposed is premised on the belief that differences between HLLs and L2Ls can enrich learning for both learners, given the right institutional mindset and supporting tools. This proposal is just one step in what must be a far more comprehensive effort. Such an effort must not be confined to individual classes and instructors, but must include researchers and practitioners to further explore how to optimize learning in mixed contexts, textbook writers and publishers to create corresponding textbooks and other pedagogical materials, and administrators to support the institutional conditions that facilitate responsive teaching in mixed contexts, in particular, professional development and small-class size.

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¹ These are self-evaluated levels of ability, and for this reason may be inflated, but even taking this into consideration, listening and speaking skills for these students are clearly higher than for the typical L2 student. It is also important to remember that HLLs' skills can vary greatly, depending on a number of factors. For a discussion of such factors (see Montrul 2012a) .

² It bears noting that approaches are compatible with form-focused instruction, but differ with the regard to the role or place of such instruction. In micro-based approaches form-focused instruction sustains and drives the progression toward more complex and discourse-based uses of language. In macro-based approaches form-focused instruction follows or emerges from discourse-based activities.

³ Though written in English, these and other prompts in this paper would be given in Spanish to students.